



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

MODERN LANGUAGE NOTES.

Baltimore, June, 1897.

NOTES TO EUGÉNIE GRANDET.

My use of Balzac's *Eugénie Grandet* as reading-matter for third-year students during two consecutive years, has resulted in the collection of some miscellaneous notes on the text, some of which may be of value or interest to other expounders and lovers of the great novelist.

I.

The following references are to Prof. Bergeron's edition¹ which has been reviewed briefly in these columns.² My notes are mere *obiter notata* and make no claim to exhaustiveness; they are concerned mainly with questions of interpretation and sometimes suggest, rather than remove, difficulties. Nothing, I may add, will please me more than to have these difficulties (real or fancied) removed by any of my better-informed colleagues.

(P. 4, l. 16 ff.) *D'un bout à l'autre de cette rue, ces mots: "Voilà un temps d'or!" se chiffrent de porte en porte.* Apparently following Petilleau,³ Prof. B. renders *se chiffrent* "are noted down." This translation seems to me to miss the full force of the original. Rather: "are figured up," "are the subject of calculations." Cf. the phrase *les dépenses se chiffrent par tant*, and see the context for the development of the same idea. Miss Wormeley's⁴ and Miss (?) Ellen Marriage's⁵ renderings are likewise unsatisfactory. The former: "are passed from door to door;" the latter: "sometimes you hear. . . the words."

(P. 12, l. 12 ff.) *Quand, après une savante conversation, son adversaire lui avait livré le secret de ses prétentions en croyant le tenir, il lui répondait,* etc. This I render: "When

1. Henry Holt & Co., 1895.

2. MOD. LANG. NOTES, Vol. xi, June, 1896, col. 380.

3. *Eugénie Grandet* . . . edited with Preface, etc., by G. Petilleau. 2d edition. Hachette & Cie., 1889.

4. *Honoré de Balzac*, translated by Katharine Prescott Wormeley, *Eugénie Grandet*. Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1895.

5. *Eugénie Grandet*. Translated by Ellen Marriage, with a Preface by George Saintsbury. London: J. M. Dent & Co.; New York: Macmillan & Co., 1895.

. . . his opponent had unwittingly betrayed to him [Grandet] the secret of his [the opponent's] intentions," etc., referring the *le* before *tenir* to *secret*. Petilleau (apparently followed by Prof. Bergeron, Miss Wormeley and the English translator) referred *le* to Grandet, and translated "to have him," "to have the advantage over him." Against this interpretation may be urged, first, the absence of a comma before *en croyant*; second, Balzac's well-known looseness in the management of his pronouns, other instances of which are not lacking in *Eugénie Grandet*.⁶

(P. 26, l. 26.) *C'est-y vous?* This is Nanon's equivalent for *est-ce vous*, as Prof. B. explains. The *y*, however, is best taken as standing for *il*, just as (p. 169, ll. 8, 9) it stands for *ils* (and later for *il*): *pus [plus] y devient vieux, pus y durcissent*, which is likewise some of Nanon's peculiar lingo. Balzac wrote *il* in another passage (p. 217, l. 16) where the old servant says, referring to Eugénie's long-awaited letter: *C'est-il celle que vous attendez?* Again (p. 61, l. 31). *C'est-il salé?*

(P. 30, l. 27.) *Comme ça nous pousse, ça! Tous les ans douze mois.* These words are addressed by Lawyer Cruchot to Eugénie on her birthday, after kissing her heartily on both cheeks, in the presence of the other Cruchots and of Eugénie's parents. Evidently: "how she shoots up, don't she?" with a good-humored appeal to the bystanders (*nous*, an "ethical dative"). It would be superfluous to quote instances where *ça* is used of persons, with contemptuous or facetious intent. The following from Sandeau may suffice: *ça n'a pas encore vingt-huit ans, eh bien! ça vous a déjà un bout de ruban à la boutonnière.* Petilleau: "how that makes us look older;" Bergeron: "how much older that makes us look;" Miss Wormeley: "how we sprout up, to be sure," which, of course, is quite satisfactory. E. Marriage: "This sort of thing makes us feel older, eh?"

(P. 84, l. 16.) *Coupant ses mouillettes.* The note to the last word ("small sips") even if correct, is certainly quite misleading to American students. Even 'sippet' (a small sop) is

6 Good examples are pp. 140, l. 33, and 153, l. 11.

uncommon enough to call for explanation.

(P. 98, l. 32.) *Mané-Thécel-Pharès*. It is perhaps worth while to meet the inevitable question of the inquisitive student and account for the difference between these words and those in King James' version. Balzac's Bible evidently reproduced the reading of the Latin Vulgate, and, through that, of the Septuagint.

(P. 99, l. 12.) *Ne m'en parle plus, sinon je t'envoie à l'abbaye de Noyers, avec Nanon, voir si j'y suis*. The last clause—"to see if I'm there"—depends closely upon the main verb *envoie* and is, I take it, only another way of saying "to get rid of you," but the dictionaries seem to afford no help in the matter, nor have I found the expression elsewhere, except in Sandeau's *la Maison de Penarvan*, ii, vii: *Allons, oust! et va voir au moulin si j'y suis!* A full explanation of the expression would be interesting. Petilleau (followed by both translators) rendered: "see if I don't," and added: "vulgar expression equivalent to the French, but not a literal translation of it." Prof. B. is silent.

(P. 128, l. 27.) *Tiens, dit Nanon, je le savons ben [bien]*. Prof. B.'s note is judicious: "Peasants of certain provinces often use *je pour nous*." This is quite sufficient for a student's text-book. The translators, however, take the expression as equivalent to *je le sais bien*; Petilleau suppresses it. Ploetz,⁷ also, commenting on *les Femmes savantes* (l. 485) says: "*J'avons pour j'ai*, faute ordinaire des gens de la campagne." The same explanation is given in A. Roche's edition of this play (Hachette). Prof. Fortier, in his new edition, leaves us quite uncertain as to his interpretation. Prof. Gasc, in editing *le Médecin malgré Lui* (i, vi) says that *je savons* is *nous savons* or (!) *je sais*.

It seems that Nanon's way of speaking invaded even the court circles in the time of Francis I., and, fortunately, we have a contemporary interpretation of the locution in Palsgrave's *Esclaircissement de la langue françoise* (1530): "cependant que *j'irons* au marché pour *nous irons*;—*j'avons* bien bu, pour *nous*

avons . . . , etc.⁸

Finally, the whole matter is so well explained by Prof. Meyer-Lübke that I cannot forbear quoting the entire passage:⁹

"Dans *je chante*, le *je* passe pour indiquer simplement la personne, mais mon pas en même temps le nombre, tandis que dans *nous chantons*, le pluriel paraît être exprimé par l'-*ons*; alors, pour obtenir la symétrie entre la 1^{re} pers. sing. et la 1^{re} pers. plur., *nous* cède la place à *je*: *je chantons* . . . Les grammairiens du xvi^e siècle parlent souvent de cet idiotisme . . . et, de nos jours, il semble régner dans tous les parlers du Nord de la France, le picard seul excepté."

(P. 163, l. 20.) *Son bonheur, amassé comme les clous semés sur la muraille, suivant la sublime expression de Bossuet* . . . The peculiar "sublimity" of Bossuet's expression will probably be lost upon us until we can at least examine the passage where he makes use of it. Unfortunately, I have not a complete Bossuet at hand to make the search, and will only remark that *clou* sometimes means "ce qui présente une saillie qui rappelle la tête d'un clou" (Darmesteter et Hatzfeld, *Dict. Général*) and "nœud dans la pierre ou le marbre" (Littré). "Her happiness, massed together in one place, as one may see the projections on a stonewall" seems to me to make passably good sense. The "sublimity," then, would consist in the keenness of observation displayed by the great pulpit orator.

(P. 189, l. 8.) *Arrive qui plante*. This expression awaits the investigator. The "happen what may" of Petilleau (apparently followed by Prof. B. and the translators), is at least doubtful. Littré says: [this expression] "se dit d'une chose qu'on veut faire à tout hasard."

It would not have been difficult for the editor to have supplied students with some explanation of the following passages: *je vas* (191, 25); *si vous la voulez garder* (177, 33 and 163, 33); *Faublas* and *les Liaisons dangereuses* (55, 20 and 21); *racheter pour une somme de* (119, 18); *quoique ça ne soye pas de l'amour* (165, 25); *du bon or* (193, 12); *sourire à froid* (194, 22); *allait disant* (210, 25); *comme les*

8. Quoted by Génin, *Lexique comparé de la langue de Molière*, Paris, 1846, p. 221.

9. *Grammaire des langues romanes*, ii, § 78, p. 109.

7. *Manuel de Littérature française*, 7^e édition, Berlin, 1883, p. 116.

Dreux reparentent un jour en Brèzé (215, 16); use of *mademoiselle* "par raillerie" (235, 4).

II.

Eugénie Grandet is a good sample of Balzac's work: a careful study of it reveals much of the author's personality, and this, by the way, seldom fails to interest instructor and student alike. The book shows the blemishes inseparable from very rapid composition; it is full of wood and stone; the life and death of Grandet produce that single, massive impression which only the fruit of a powerful imagination can produce. It is thus a characteristic product of those three faculties of extraordinary vigor, which, as now is generally agreed, were the mainsprings of Balzac's genius.

The first of these expressed itself in his own motto: *Il faut piocher ferme*—in other words, a power of self-devotion, of self-immolation to labor which resulted in the erection of the vast edifice of the *Comédie humaine*; which cut off his life before its time, and which made literally true Bourget's remark: *Balzac n'a pas eu le temps de vivre*.

Then, in the second place, his was a nature unusually sensitive to impressions of outward objects. Sainte-Beuve remarked, soon after the novelist's death, that it was true of Balzac, as of one of his contemporaries, that from his youth up he perceived things with such a keenness of sensibility "*que c'était comme une lame fine qui lui entraît à chaque instant dans le cœur*."¹⁰

Lastly, a powerful imagination which seized upon its own product with such avidity as to make his characters as real to him as the man at his side. Nothing, in fact, better illustrates Balzac as a writer than the following reminiscence of him by the Baronne de Pommereul,¹¹ which is certainly worth quoting.

"He had a way," says the Baronne, "of describing everything so that you seemed to see it just as it happened. He would, for example, begin a story thus: 'General, you must have known at Lille the so-and-so family . . . Not the branch that lived at Roubaix,—no, but those that intermarried with the Bethunes . . . Well, at one time there happened a

drama in that family.' And then he would go on, holding us spell-bound for an hour by the charm of his narration. When he had finished we used to shake ourselves to make sure of our own reality. 'Is it all really true, Balzac?' we would ask him. Balzac would look at us a moment with a gleam of cunning in his eyes, and then, with a roar of laughter,—for his laughter was always an explosion,—he would cry out 'Not one word of truth in it, from beginning to end! It was pure Balzac! Say, general, is it not rather pleasant to be able to make all that up out of your own head.'"

THOMAS A. JENKINS.

Vanderbilt University.

ON THE ACCENTUATION OF THE GERMAN PREFIX *un-*.

NOT long ago I was led incidentally to examine and compare the different rules given in grammars and other books of reference in regard to the accentuation of German derivatives with the prefix *un-*. The results of this investigation, necessarily incomplete, are embodied in the following paragraphs.

Among the American grammars that are commonly used in high schools and colleges, those of Brandt, Thomas, Whitney, and Joynes-Meissner were examined.

Brandt (§422, 6), after admitting the difficulty of giving a general rule, says:

"*Un-* compounded with nouns and adjectives not derived from verbs attracts the chief accent; if they are derived from verbs, then the stem-syllable retains its original accent;¹ for example, *unfruchtbar*, *undankbar*, *unklar*, *Unmensch*, but *ungläublich*, *unsaglich*, *unentbehrlich*, *unverantwortlich*, *unbegreiflich*. Notice, however, *unendlich*, *ungeheuer-ungeheuer*.—With regard to adjectives there is also a feeling approaching a principle, that *un-* should have the chief accent, when a regular adjective exists, of which the compound with *un-* denotes the contrary or negation: *brauchbar*, *unbrauchbar*, *sichtbar*, *unsichtbar*, etc. This feeling frequently unsettles the accent, as *unverzeihlich* > *unverzeihlich*."

It is worthy of remark that Brandt makes no special reference to the accent of compounds of *un-* and a perfect participle, although there seems to be much uncertainty about this point.

¹ Here, as in most of the quotations, the spacing is mine.

¹⁰. *Causeries du Lundi*, ii, 445.

¹¹. Translated in the "Contributors' Club," *Atlantic Monthly*, December, 1885.